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ABSTRACT

The study described here identified and quantified the primary reasons why college or university student newspaper advisers quit. Members of College Media Advisers, a national organization of college and university advisers, were sent surveys. A total of 233 of 449 members returned the surveys, for a response rate of 52%. Respondents indicated that there were many contributing factors: (1) 93.5% said they enjoyed advising, and 94.5% said they enjoyed classroom teaching; (2) 21% said they wanted to leave advising for classroom teaching; (3) 25.8% said that tenure was more difficult for an adviser to receive than for classroom teachers; (4) 56.1% said they had lower status than classroom teachers; (5) many advisers believed other journalism faculty members were paid more for the same education level (43.9%) or professional experience (41.9%); (6) while more than half (53.1%) of respondents said they were best prepared by their professional experience (versus academics), one-fourth (26.2%) had two years or less of it; and (7) while 14.2% had been asked in the last year not to publish an article, only 4.3% complied. Findings suggest that newspaper advisers enjoy the work, but they seek parity with classroom teachers on issues of status, compensation, and tenure. (Nineteen tables of data and 34 notes are included.) (RS)

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Abstract

Why Newspaper Advisers Quit

Across the United States teachers assist students in publishing campus newspapers. The newspaper advising position is held in high regard at some colleges. At other schools, however, it is considered a "second string" teaching assignment for those with low seniority. Earlier studies have determined that employment periods for advisers are generally less than for other categories of educators. Yet the specific reasons why advisers quit have never been determined. This study identifies and quantifies their primary reasons.

Respondents to a national survey of advisers indicate that there are many contributing factors. While nearly all (93.5%) say they enjoy advising, even more (94.5%) say they enjoy classroom teaching. Twenty-one percent say they want to leave advising for classroom teaching. One-fourth (25.8%) say that tenure is more difficult for an adviser to receive than classroom teachers. Over half (56.1%) say they have lower status than classroom teachers. Perceptually, many advisers believe other journalism faculty members are paid more for the same education level (43.9%) or professional experience (41.9%). While more than half (53.1%) of respondents said they were best prepared by their professional experience (versus academics), one-fourth (26.2%) have two years or less of it. Surprisingly, pressure from administrators does not seem to be a major factor. While 14.2% have been asked in the last year not to publish an article, only 4.3% complied.

The paper concludes with suggestions to administrators on what characteristics to seek when hiring an applicant and steps they can take to increase adviser longevity.

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Abstract

Why Newspaper Advisers Quit

Respondents to a national survey of newspaper advisers indicate why they quit at rates higher than for many other categories of educators. Among the factors: preference for classroom teaching (21%); perception of unfair tenure policies (25.8%); belief they have lower teaching status (56.1%); perception of less pay (43.9%); etc. The paper concludes with suggestions to administrators on what characteristics to seek when hiring an applicant and steps they can take to increase adviser longevity.

Open Competition

Why Newspaper Advisers Quit

National Conference of AEJMC,
Newspaper Division

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Statement of Problem and Topic

Across the United States instructors assist students in publishing campus newspapers. At some colleges the newspaper is held in high regard, with the adviser holding a coveted teaching position. For others, the role of newspaper adviser is a "second string" teaching assignment, relegated to those with low seniority.

Previous studies have documented *quantitative* concerns of these newspaper advisers--sources of publication funding, average education levels of advisers, poor tenure track opportunity and compensation levels at various-sized colleges and universities. Yet little information has been gathered to explain how advisers *qualitatively* perceive their work and employment conditions.

Questions abound. Are advisers in their position by choice? Do they perceive a second-class standing on journalism faculties? How do they believe their peers view their work? Are tenure rates lower for advisers? If so, what is the depth of resentment? Do they feel inadequately prepared to teach practical production skills? What pressures do they perceive from administrators to compromise journalistic integrity? These questions become even more disconcerting when a replicated survey by Kopenhaver and Spielberger indicates that more than half of all advisers have been at their current position for less than five years.[1]

Scope of Study

Through a national survey of student newspaper advisers this study will seek to determine why employment periods for advisers are generally less than for other categories of educators. Using standard social science statistical tests, their qualitative responses will receive quantification, to determine how strongly these beliefs are held.

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[1] Lillian Lodge Kopenhaver and Ronald E. Spielberger, "The Adviser's Role," *College Media Review*, Winter,1986-87, pp. 8-12. (Updated from a similar survey conducted in 1984.)

Review of Literature

A review of literature found no studies specifically questioning college advisers as to why they quit. But peripherally some articles have addressed aspects of the question.

Lower Compensation

Both part-time and full-time advisers appear to be under compensated for their work. Kopenhaver and Spielberger determined in 1991 that nearly one-fourth (24.9%) of part-time publication advisers receive no release time from teaching or additional salary for their advising job, a percentage that has continued to increase.[2] Full-time advisers appear to make less money than their peers. While college and university mass communications faculty groups (professor, associate professor and assistant professor) have a mean salary of $40,862.66,[3] only 34.7% of full-time advisers receive $35,000 or more.[4]

Low Tenure Opportunity

This income disparity may be fueled by a lower tenure opportunity for advisers, when compared to other journalism instructors. Fedler and Counts' survey of journalism faculty teaching a variety of courses found 67.4% say they are satisfied with their institutions' requirements for tenure.[5] Kopenhaver and Spielberger determined in 1991 that 68.1% of publication advisers surveyed do not have tenure and are in positions that do not lead to tenure.[6] A 1991 AAUP study indicates that 89% of all faculty members are tenure track and that 64% of all college-level faculty members have tenure.[7] This indicates that 71.9% of all university faculty who could have tenure do, while Kopenhaver and Spielberger find that just

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2 Kopenhaver and Spielberger, "Advising in the 1990s: Some Gains; Fewer Losses," College Media Review, Summer-Fall, 1991, pp.19-26.

3 Study for American Association of University Professors, "The Future of Academic Salaries: Will the 1990s Be a Bust Like the 1970s or a Boom Like the 1980s?," *Academe*, March-April, 1991 pp.13.

4 Kopenhaver and Spielberger, 1991, op. cit.

5 Fred Fedler and Tim Counts, "National J-faculty survey reveals job likes, dislikes," *Journalism Educator*, Autumn, 1982, 3-6.

6 Kopenhaver and Spielberger, 1991, op. cit.

7 AAUP study, 1991, pp.13-29, op. cit.

53% of publication advisers do.[8] Their study, however, did not determine whether advisers were aware of this statistical differential, nor did it gauge their resentment of it.

Satisfaction Levels

No study preceding this one has measured how strongly advisers enjoy their work. High turnover rates documented by Kopenhaver and Spielberger[9] would suggest satisfaction rates lower than those in academic areas with less turnover. Fedler and Counts found that 83% of faculty in journalism and mass communication were "very" or "moderately" satisfied with their jobs.[10] Additionally, Weaver and Wilhoit determined that tenured faculty were somewhat more likely to be satisfied (86%) than were untenured (78%).[11] They found that four-fifths would once again choose a career in college teaching if they had to make the decision again. Pratt's research indicates that heavy workloads and inadequate compensation among journalism educators were most frequently cited as contributors to dissatisfaction.[12] But these studies did not separate journalism educators by their type of teaching assignments.

A 1984 survey of 381 Indiana high school publication advisers sought to identify why the "burnout" rate was high. Twenty-nine percent related that the most significant frustration with advising was a feeling of being "overworked." The second most common complaint (16%) was "administrative pressure," embodied in a lack of trust, censorship, restricted freedom and political influences.[13]

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8 Kopenhaver and Spielberger, 1991, op. cit.
9 Ibid.
10 Fred Fedler and Tim Counts, op. cit.
11 David Weaver and G. Cleveland Wilhoit, "A profile of JMC educators:traits, attitudes and values," *Journalism Educator*, Summer, 1988.
12 Sally Bourgois Pratt, "Career Development of Journalism and Mass Communication Faculty Members," an unpublished dissertation, University of Minnesota, June, 1973 as quoted by David Weaver and G. Cleveland Wilhoit in their study, "A profile of JMC educators:traits, attitudes and values," *Journalism Educator*, Summer, 1988.
13 Marilyn A. Weaver, "Burnout plagues press advisors in high schools," *Journalism Educator*, Spring, 1984, 37-39.

Control over News Content

For some advisers, the position may border on public relations publishing. Kopenhaver and Spielberger reported in 1987 that of 340 advisers responding to a survey, 35.5% answer to the president, vice-president or a dean.[14] In their 1991 study they found that 25.3 percent receive some level of funding from their college or university sources.[15] Nelson and Kopenhaver found that 95% of advisers believe student publications should be allowed to run truthful stories even if they damage the institution's reputation. The researchers also found that 87% of advisers believe administrators should not have the right to prohibit stories they deem harmful.[16] These studies, however, did not measure the extent to which adviser policies and beliefs may effect relations with administrators. Such information could assist in explaining why advisers quit.

Preparation for Advising

Whether advisers perceive themselves as being adequately trained for their unique work has apparently not been directly addressed in research. A 1978 study suggests, however, that newspaper advisers must have experience in the various aspects of newspaper production in order to teach students.[17] Additionally, a 1990 study of college advertising personnel indicates there "has been little published on which faculty qualifications, orientations and experiences are most common."[18] It has yet to be researched whether a pronounced lacking in these areas exists among student newspaper advisers; and if so, how it may influence the high turnover rates.

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14 Kopenhaver and Spielberger, 1987, op. cit.

15 Kopenhaver and Spielberger, 1991, op. cit.

16 David C. Nelson and Lillian Lodge Kopenhaver, "Ethical standards not quite as standard in field as on paper," *College Media Review*, Winter/Spring, 1992.

17 Jay Friedlander, "Professor, class 'take over' state's largest weekly," *Journalism Educator*, October, 1978, 48-49.

18 Kent M. Lancaster, Helen E. Katz and Jungsik Cho, "Advertising faculty describes theory v. practice debate," *Journalism Educator*, Spring 1990, 9-21.

Education Levels and Professional Experience

While Kopenhaver and Spielberger have determined the educational levels attained by advisers,[19] no researchers have attempted to determine whether education or professional (non-classroom) work experience best prepared advisers for their work. Lack of adequate preparation in these two areas could lead to frustration and resignation.

Educator Self-Perceptions

No previous studies have determined whether advisers believe their work is as important as that performed by classroom journalism educators. A "second string" perception could motivate advisers to quit.

Debate continues on some campuses whether advisers are teachers. Ten of 15 interviewed in Conn's 1987 study said their universities considered student publications advising to be a teaching assignment. Twelve said they were classified as faculty members, two were staff, and one was considered both. Conn concluded that "much work remains in defining the method to successfully evaluate teaching effectiveness of student publication advisers."[20]

Impact of Literature on this Study

This present study questions advisers directly about their perceptions. Through a national survey they are asked to compare themselves to classroom journalism instructors in areas of compensation and tenure opportunity. Job satisfaction levels are also measured, as are news content pressures from administrators. Advisers are asked whether education or professional experience best prepared them. To determine future employment trends, advisers are also asked what they plan to do in five years.

With Kopenhaver's and Spielberger's research indicating that more than half the college media advisers have held their positions for less than five years,[21] a determination as to why advisers quit will assist both advisers and administrators. Advisers (or those considering such

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19 Kopenhaver and Spielberger, 1991, op. cit.
20 Earl L. Conn, "Rating advisers on effectiveness as teachers," *Journalism Educator*, Spring, 1988, 47-48.
21 Kopenhaver and Spielberger, 1991, op. cit.

a vocation) will be better able to prepare themselves for their career because of this research. Administrators will gain insight into what characteristics to look for in candidates seeking an advising position.

Hypotheses

Five hypotheses are central to this study. They will probe the qualitative concerns and perceptions held by advisers. They will also form a framework to measure how advisers perceive their status when coorientationally compared with their journalistic colleagues teaching in a standard classroom instructional environment.

Hypothesis One:

A "Second String" Self-Perception

Student newspaper advisers will say other journalism teachers consider producing a student newspaper "less important" than classroom teaching. Most student newspaper advisers will believe they are paid less than classroom journalism instructors. They will also believe that tenure is less available to them.

Hypothesis Two:

Low Satisfaction Levels

One-third of advisers will indicate they do not enjoy advising student newspapers. Many will indicate a preference for classroom teaching. A strong correlation will exist between years of professional (non-classroom) experience and satisfaction. Similarly, those without "adequate experience" will manifest the greatest dissatisfaction. For purposes of this hypothesis, the "adequate experience" threshold is four years or more of journalistic endeavor.

Hypothesis Three:

Pressure from Administrators

Twenty-five percent of advisers will experience pressure from college administrators, who ask them not to report on certain issues.

Hypothesis Four:

Preparation

Advisers will consider professional experience more valuable than academics in preparing them for student newspaper advising.

Hypothesis Five:

Half of Advisers Want to Quit

In concert with Kopenhaver and Spielberger findings (with all forms of publication advising) half of student newspaper advisers will indicate they plan not to advise five years from now.

Methodology and Data Analysis

Choosing the Sample

There are about 1,200 student newspapers nationally,[22] with nearly half members of College Media Advisers. Four hundred forty-nine surveys were sent to a CMA member list, representing college and university newspaper advisers nationally.

Using the organization's membership list assures that the student newspaper receiving the survey had an adviser. This specialized mailing does not appear to limit the generalizability of this study. In fact, it may enhance it, since this study desires to reach only student newspapers with advisers. (Many independent student newspapers do not have an adviser.)

Further, CMA director Ronald Spielberger indicated that the organization's membership is demographically represented by the major groupings of concern to this study: university size, two-year versus four-year institutions and whether the college is public or private.

Alternating names from the alphabetical list were chosen to ensure random selection. Two-year and four-year colleges (both public and private) were surveyed.

Pretesting

A survey pretest was mailed to 25 advisers during the first week of April, 1991. Fourteen were returned, netting a 56% response. The test survey (n=449) was mailed during the last week of April 22, 1991. The response rate was 52%, with 233 of the seven-page surveys returned before data processing began. There was no follow-up mailing.

Data Analysis

The 233 surveys were processed through an SPSS program. From this process quantitative comparisons of *qualitative* survey data were gathered and processed. Frequencies and cross tabulations are reported, identifying specific traits, beliefs and conditions sought through the hypotheses. Chi Square testing is used where nominal or categorical information is present, to

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22 College Medias Advisers (CMA) figures, January, 1991.

identify statistically significant trends. Qualitative "short-answer" responses are reported here also, to illustrate the mood and feeling of some of the advisers surveyed.

Results

"Second String" Self-Perception

In support of the hypothesis (H_1), a majority of advisers (56.1%, n=214) indicated that they believe other journalism instructors find advising to be a lower prestige position in journalism education than classroom teaching (See **Table 1**). A Chi Square indicates that statistical evidence exists that this correlation is not by chance (X^2=84.150, d.f.=2, p<,01).

While most advisers believe other classroom journalism teachers view them as "second string" teachers, more than three-fourths (77.7%) of advisers believe their work is equal in importance to standard classroom teaching (See **Table 2**). Few believe that advising is less important (11.2%) or more important than classroom teaching (11.2%). This adviser belief that their contribution to journalism education is equal in importance to classroom instruction reached statistical significance (X^2=198.223, d.f.=2, p≤.01), indicating these differences probably did not occur by chance.

Advisers Comment

Many advisers wrote comments expressing their emotions on the issue.

When asked, *"Do you believe student newspaper advising is considered by most journalism faculty as 'less important' than standard classroom teaching?"*, an adviser at a four-year private college in Ohio commented: "Generally yes. The mystique of the professional lecture is often adopted by those who ought to know better."

TABLE 1: Advisers say colleagues consider classroom "more important"

	Frequencies	Percentage
Less important than advising	12	5.6%
Equal in importance to advising	82	38.3%
More important than advising	120	56.1%

n=214; Missing=19, (X^2=84.150, d.f.=2, p<,01)

TABLE 2: Advisers believe their work is equal in importance.

	Frequencies	Percentage
Less important than advising	25	11.2%
Equal in importance to advising	174	77.7%
More important than advising	25	11.2%

n=224; Missing=9, X^2=198.223, d.f.=2, p≤.01

"Absolutely," responded an adviser at another four-year private school in Ohio. "At a school like this, a liberal arts college, teaching is central."

One adviser from a community college in Florida commented: "The adviser is seen as someone with less ability. He/she is seen almost as a para-professional."

Others were less harsh. "It hasn't been discussed," related an adviser of a Tennessee newspaper at a four-year public college, "but I would imagine the consensus is that it's less important than teaching. Few faculty members treat it as the priceless experience it is."

Commented a four-year public school adviser from Kentucky: "Faculty members don't understand the duties or role of the adviser. I believe several don't really know how a newspaper gets published, and don't understand the specific actions that must go on to meet deadlines. I know I put in far more hours on the job than most do."

Confessed one adviser from a two-year college in Illinois: "I honestly don't know. But they do consider it more exciting than just straight teaching."

Most Advisers Unaware of Pay Differentials

Previous research indicates that a double standard exists in income and tenure policies. As detailed in the review of literature, while college communications faculty groups (including the ranks of professor, associate professor and assistant professor) have a mean salary of $40,862.66,[23] only 34.7% of advisers receive $35,000 or more. h/ Data from this study indicates that contrary to the hypothesis (H_1)less than half of all advisers are aware of this qualitative compensation bias against them.

[23] AAUP study, 1991, pp. 13, op cit.

TABLE 3: Perceptions of Compensation When Compared With Other Journalism Instructors

With Same Level of Education

	Percentage
Advisers paid better than other jour.	9.5%
Paid about the same	46.6%
Other jour. paid better than advisers	43.9%

n=189

With Same Amount of Professional Experience

	Percentage
Advisers paid better than other jour.	9.4%
Paid about the same	48.7%
Other jour. paid better than advisers	41.9%

n=191

When questioned about financial compensation, 43.9% said other journalism faculty with the same education levels are paid more (See **Table 3**). Nearly half (46.6%) believe that both groups are paid the same, while 9.5% say advisers are paid better (n=189).

Similarly, when asked about financial compensation and levels of professional experience, again nearly half (48.7%) said the two groups are paid the same, with 9.4% reporting advisers are paid better (n=191). These data suggests that most advisers (58.1%, a totaling of the two groups) are either not aware of previous economic studies or are unconvinced by them. Yet a substantial number of advisers (43.9% of those with the same amount of academic education and 41.9% with the same amount of professional experience) do perceive a double standard.

Advisers Recognize Tenure Bias

Advisers strongly perceive a secondary status between themselves and other journalism faculty when tenure policy is considered. As discussed earlier in the literature section, Kopenhaver's and Spielberger's research has shown that 68.1% of publication advisers (including publications other than specifically newspapers) either do not have tenure or are not in positions leading to tenure.[24] This study finds 69.2% of student newspaper advisers say they believe tenure at their college or university is either not available to them (43.4%) or

[24] Ibid.

TABLE 4: Advisers Say Colleagues Consider Classroom "More Important" for Tenure
Q: Do you believe tenure is as possible for a newspaper adviser to attain as it is for other journalism instructors at your institution?

	Percentage
Easier for adviser to attain tenure	2.0%
About the same possibility/tenure	28.8%
More difficult for an adviser/tenure	25.8%
Tenure not available for adviser here	43.4%

n=198

more difficult (25.8%) than for other journalism faculty (See **Table 4**). This compares to the AAUP study indicates an opposite trend: that 89% of all faculty members are tenure track and that 64% of all college-level faculty members have tenure.[25]

Education Levels and Tenure

Tenure is least available (see **Table 5**) to those advisers who have a bachelor's degree as their highest education level (n=46). Of those with bachelor's degrees, 82.2% indicated that tenure was either not available to them (61.3%) or hard to get (21.3%).

Those with a master's degree (n=116) have a slightly higher chance of receiving tenure than the general sample. Nearly two-thirds (65.1%) of these advisers with a master's degree say tenure is either not available (40.1%) or hard to get (25%). These advisers are four percent more likely to receive tenure then the general sample population.

TABLE 5: Advisers with Doctorate Perceive Greater Tenure Opportunity.
*Q: Do you believe tenure is **as possible** for a newspaper adviser to attain as it is for other journalism instructors at your institution?*

	Easier To Get	Same Possibility	Hard To Get	Tenure Available (Total, from left)	Tenure Not Available	% of Total
Ph.D.	2.9%	29.4%	35.3%	**67.6%**	32.4%	17.4%
Master's	2.1%	32.8%	25.0%	**59.9%**	**40.1%**	59.2%
Bachelor's	0.0%	17.4%	21.3%	**38.7%**	**61.3%**	23.4%

n=196; Missing=37, X^2= 8.07, d.f.= 2, p<.02

[25] AAUP study, 1991, pp.13-29, op. cit.

Those advisers with a doctorate (67.7%, n=34) say tenure is either not available (32.4%) or hard to get (35.3%). Thus advisers with a Ph.D. are nearly equal to the general sample population (67.5%) in their perception of low or no tenure availability.

However advisers with a doctorate report the best possibilities of receiving tenure. Just one-third (32.4%) of those advisers with a doctorate say tenure is not available to them, while 40.1% of those with a master's degree and 61.3% with a bachelor's degree indicate tenure is not available.

Correlation between education levels and tenure possibility reached statistical significance (X^2= 8.07, d.f.= 2, p<.02). This indicates that the correlation is probably not by chance.

Professional Experience Levels and Tenure

Professional (non-classroom) experience appears to lower the possibility of receiving tenure (See Table 6). Nearly half (48.7%) of those with high professional experience (10 years or more) report that tenure is not available, while those with medium experience (four to nine years) reply similarly (48.1%). Those with low professional experience (one to three years) actually report a higher possibility of tenure (65.2%) than those with more experience. This is at least partially because many of those with less professional experience have spent their years gaining advanced degrees, thus opening doors to tenure via an academic route. These perceptions did not reach statistical significance (X^2= 3.31, d.f.= 2, N.S.), indicating that these differences could have occurred by chance.

TABLE 6: Advisers with High Professional Experience Perceive Lower Tenure Opportunity.
Q: Do you believe tenure is as possible for a newspaper adviser to attain as it is for other journalism instructors at your institution?

	Easier To Get	Same Possibility	Hard To Get	Tenure Available (Total, from left)	Tenure Not Available	% of Total
Low Exp.	4.6%	33.3%	27.3%	**65.2%**	34.9%	33.7%
Med. Exp.	1.9%	25.0%	25.0%	51.9%	48.1%	26.5%
High Exp.	0%	27.0%	24.4%	51.4%	48.7%	39.8%

n=196, Missing=37, X^2= 3.31, d.f.= 2, N.S.

TABLE 7: Enjoyment Levels

Adviser Enjoyment of Advising

Q: How much do you enjoy advising student newspapers?

	Percentage
Enjoy strongly	63.8%
Enjoy somewhat	29.7%
Neutral	1.7%
Dislike somewhat	3.0%
Dislike strongly	0.9%

n=232

Adviser Enjoyment of Classroom Teaching

Q: If you teach in a standard classroom setting, how much do you enjoy it?

	Percentage
Enjoy strongly	67.9%
Enjoy somewhat	26.6%
Neutral	3.8%
Dislike somewhat	1.6%
Dislike strongly	0.0%

n=184

Satisfaction Levels

"Strong Enjoyment" Higher for Classroom Teaching than Advising

Contrary to the hypothesis (H_2), most advisers (93.5%) enjoy advising, either strongly (63.8%) or somewhat (29.7%). While 93.5% of advisers enjoy their work, even more enjoy classroom teaching (See Table 7). Nearly all advisers (94.5%) report they enjoy classroom teaching, either strongly (67.9%) or somewhat (26.6%, n=184).

17.9% of Advisers Would Rather Teach in Classroom

More than half (52%) of advisers said they desire to continue in their advising duties, while 17.9% said they preferred classroom teaching. (The 17.9% is comprised of 15.5% seeking no advising responsibilities and 2.4% desiring to teach with limited advising responsibilities). Thirty percent said they preferred both equally.

TABLE 8: Adviser Academic Employment Preference
Q: Which do you prefer: a standard classroom teaching assignment or newspaper advising responsibilities?

	Percentage
1. Stand. teaching with no advising	15.5%
2. Advising with some stand. teaching	35.0%
3. Advising with no classroom teaching	17.0%
4. Prefer both equally	30.1%
5. Teach with some advising (write-in)	2.5%
Preference for classroom teaching (1 and 5)	17.9%
Prefer both equally (4)	30.1%
Advising preference (2 and 3)	52.0%

n=206

While this level does fall short of the one-third level predicted in the hypothesis, these findings do offer evidence that a sizable number of advisers (17.9%) prefer classroom teaching over student newspaper advising.

Correlation Between Enjoyment Levels and Professional Experience

To determine if satisfaction levels were affected by the amount of professional (non-classroom) experience, three categories were created: low experience (three years or less), medium (4-9 years) and high (10 or more years). Most advisers (40.3%, See **Table 9**) in the sample had high experience, 26.1% had medium and 33.6% had low (n=226).

While numeric correlation was found between enjoyment levels and professional (non-classroom) experience, this association did not reach significance (X^2= 2.83, d.f.= 2,'N.S., n=213). Thus this portion of the hypothesis (H_2) was not supported, since this difference could

TABLE 9: Enjoyment Levels and Professional (non-classroom) Experience

	Enjoy Strongly	Enjoy Somewhat	Neutral	Dislike Somewhat	Dislike Strongly	% of Total
Low Exp.	57.9%	35.5%	1.3%	5.3%	None	33.6%
Med Exp.	**66.1%**	28.8%	3.4%	5.7%	1.7%	26.1%
High Exp.	**70.3%**	24.2%	1.1%	2.2%	2.2%	40.3%

n=226; Missing=7, X^2= 2.83, d.f.= 2, N.S.

have occurred by chance. Those with high experience levels (n=226) were more likely to "enjoy strongly" their advising duties (70.3%) than those with medium experience (66.1%) or low (57.9%) professional background.

Pressure from Administrators

Funding Profile

This study has found that nearly one-third (34.6%) of student newspapers with advisers receive at least partial funding from college or university administrative sources. Nearly half (47.2%) receive at least some funding from student fees. Most (69.1%) advisers receive their entire salary from college or university funding. Just 17% of advisers receive no funding from public (college or university) sources (n=223).

Advisers Perception of News Selection from Funding Sources

Even though salaries and newspaper production costs are strongly tied to public funding sources at many schools, advisers as a whole indicate they perceive little if any interference or pressure on news selection (See **Table 10**).

Nearly two-thirds (64.3%) of all survey respondents (n=221) said funding was "strongly not tied" to control of the news. Just 12.2% indicated that funding was either "somewhat" (9%) or "strongly" (3.2%) tied --this just half of the percentage hypothesized (H_3).

A somewhat stronger pattern between administrative funding and control of the news is found when only those receiving such funding are examined (See **Table 11**). Of the one-third of

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Table 10: Advisers Perceive Little Control By Administrators
Q: At your college or university, how strong is the tie between public funding of the student newspaper (or private funding if you are at a private college) and control of news selection or content?

	Percentage
Strongly tied	3.2%
Somewhat tied	9.0%
Neutral	17.2%
Somewhat not tied	6.3%
Strongly not tied	64.3%

n=221

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have occurred by chance. Those with high experience levels (n=226) were more likely to "enjoy strongly" their advising duties (70.3%) than those with medium experience (66.1%) or low (57.9%) professional background.

Pressure from Administrators

Funding Profile

This study has found that nearly one-third (34.6%) of student newspapers with advisers receive at least partial funding from college or university administrative sources. Nearly half (47.2%) receive at least some funding from student fees. Most (69.1%) advisers receive their entire salary from college or university funding. Just 17% of advisers receive no funding from public (college or university) sources (n=223).

Advisers Perception of News Selection from Funding Sources

Even though salaries and newspaper production costs are strongly tied to public funding sources at many schools, advisers as a whole indicate they perceive little if any interference or pressure on news selection (See **Table 10**).

Nearly two-thirds (64.3%) of all survey respondents (n=221) said funding was "strongly not tied" to control of the news. Just 12.2% indicated that funding was either "somewhat" (9%) or "strongly" (3.2%) tied --this just half of the percentage hypothesized (H_3).

A somewhat stronger pattern between administrative funding and control of the news is found when only those receiving such funding are examined (See **Table 11**). Of the one-third of

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Table 10: Advisers Perceive Little Control By Administrators
Q: At your college or university, how strong is the tie between public funding of the student newspaper (or private funding if you are at a private college) and control of news selection or content?

	Percentage
Strongly tied	3.2%
Somewhat tied	9.0%
Neutral	17.2%
Somewhat not tied	6.3%
Strongly not tied	64.3%

n=221

TABLE 11: Most advisers say administrators do not influence news content.
Q: At your college or university, how strong is the tie between public funding of the student newspaper (or private funding if you are a private college) and control of news selection or content?

	Strongly Tied	Somewhat Tied	Neutral	Somewhat Not Tied	Strongly Not Tied	% of Total
No funds/ University	3.5%	7.7%	13.4%	4.9%	70.4%	**65.4%**
University Funding	1.3%	12.0%	24.0%	9.3%	53.3%	**34.6%**

n=217; Missing=16, X^2= 5.1258, d.f.= 3, N.S.

student newspapers receiving university funding (not including student activity fees), 53.3% said news selection was strongly not tied, 9.3% said it was somewhat not tied, 24% were neutral, 12% said somewhat tied and 1.3% indicated it was strongly tied. Yet there is no significant difference (X^2= 5.1258, d.f.= 3, N.S.) between those receiving administrative funding and those without it. Most advisers in both groups indicate that administrative funding is not tied to control of news selection. From a statistical perspective, the difference between the groups could be by chance.

Table 12: Most Advisers Are Not Asked to Withhold a News Story
Q: During the last year, how often (if ever) have you been specifically asked by your college or university administration not to publish a story or photograph, or not to report on an issue?

	Percentage
Never	85.8%
Once	3.9%
Twice	6.9%
3 times	2.2%
4 times	0.9%
5 times	0.4%

Q: If asked, write number of times you complied with their request:

	Percentage
Never	95.7%
Once	2.6%
Twice	1.3%
3 times	0.4%
4 times	0.4%

n=232

Pressure on News Selection

Advisers were also asked the extent to which funding sources influenced news selection.[26] Most (85.8%) advisers indicated they had never been asked by university administrators *not to publish* an article (See **Table 12**). Few indicated they had been asked (3.9% said once; 6.9% said twice, 2.2% said three times). When asked how often they complied with such a request, 95.7% said never.

Thirty-four percent of student newspapers receive university funding from administrative sources. (Student fees are excluded.) When only those receiving university funding were asked, a slightly higher number (87.2%) than the general sample population said they had never been asked. When asked how often they complied with such a request, 94.9% said never.

Table 13: Times Administrators Asked Advisers To Publish News Items

Q: During the last year, how often (if ever) have you been specifically asked by your college or university administration to publish a story or photograph, or not to report on an issue?

	Percentage
Never (0%)	71.1%
Once	5.3%
Twice	3.9%
3 times	3.1%
4 times	3.5%
5 times	2.6%
6 to 10 times	4.8%
11 to 15 times	3.9%
16 or more	1.6%

n=228

Q: If asked, write number of times you complied with their request:

	Percentage
Never (0%)	80.4%
Once	5.5%
Twice	2.3%
3 times	3.7%
4 times	2.3%
5 times	1.4%
6 to 10 times	1.9%
11 to 15 times	2.3%
20 times	0.5%

n=219

[26] A minority of advisers indicated through their voluntary "write in" survey comments that student editors made decisions on news selection--not them. (Of the 233 respondents, the number answering any or all of the eight questions ranged from 219 to 232.) Most advisers answered the series of questions without such additional comments.

Those with income from administrators complied slightly more often (.8%) than those without this income source. This difference did not reach statistical significance levels, thus it is possible this difference could have occurred by chance.

When asked if they had ever been asked by administrators *to publish* a story or photograph (see **Table 13**), 71.1% of the general sample said they have never been asked. When asked how often they complied with such a request, 80.4% said never.

When only those receiving university funding were asked, 72.4% said they had never been asked. When asked how often they complied with such a request, 77.8% said never. Those with income from administrators complied slightly (3.5%) more often than those without this income source. This difference did not reach statistical significance levels, indicating it is possible the numeric correlation occurred by chance.

20.4% Say Pressured or Threatened with Job Dismissal

Nearly four-fifths (79.7%) of advisers say they have never been threatened with job dismissal (n=231, See **Table 14**)). Yet 20.4% of advisers indicate that during their career they have either been pressured strongly by administrators (15.2%) or have been threatened with dismissal (5.2%).

While 20.4% of advisers report such confrontation with administrators during their careers (**Table 14**), few believe that administrators attempt to control news content in student newspapers (See **Table 10**). At levels lower than that hypothesized (H_3), only 12.2% of advisers indicated that news selection is strongly tied (3.2%) or somewhat tied (9%) to

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Table 14: One-Fifth of Advisers Report Pressure or Dismissal
Q: Have you been threatened with job dismissal because you ran--or considered running--a news story that administrators said they did not want printed?

	Percentage
Job dismissal threatened due to news story	5.2%
Pressured strongly, but never threatened	15.2%
No, job dismissal not been threatened	79.7%

n=231

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administrative funding sources. This conclusion by the majority of those surveyed was not significantly different from the 13.2% found among those receiving funding from administrators.

While journalists and academics on occasion state that student newspapers are battered by administrative pressure, this study finds that most advisers do not perceive it. While 20.4% say they have been pressured or threatened with job dismissal sometime during their advising career, just 12.2% believe there is a tie between their administrative funding source and news selection--and only 3.2% strongly believe this.

Preparation Levels

As hypothesized (H_4), the majority of advisers surveyed consider professional experience more valuable than academics in preparing them for their advising duties. This study suggests that as education increases, the perceived importance of professional experiences diminishes, but remains strong.

An Education/Experience Equation

The findings indicate an equation exists between education and experience: the lower the education level, the higher professional (non-classroom) experience is valued. Similarly, the higher the education level, the lower the value is placed on professional experience. But no matter what the education level--bachelor's degree, master's degree or doctorate-- all educational levels view their professional experience as highly valuable in carrying out their duties.

Before presenting evidence for this finding, a discussion of education levels and professional experience levels will assist in understanding the relationship between these elements.

Education and Professional Experience Levels

A majority of advisers surveyed (n=228) have a master's degree (58.8%, See **Table 14**)). A bachelor of science or bachelor of arts degree is the highest level of education for 23.7%. A Ph.D. is held by 17.5%.

TABLE 15: The higher the education level, the lower the professional experience.

	Low Exp. (3 yrs. or less)	Med. Exp (4 to 9 yrs)	High Exp. (10 yrs or more)	% of Total
Ph.D.	**48.7%**	25.6%	25.6%	17.5%
Master's	**34.1%**	30.3%	**35.6%**	58.8%
Bachelor's	22.6%	17.0%	**60.4%**	23.7%

n=224; Missing=9, X^2= 15.271, d.f.= 4, p<.01

As discussed earlier (in H_2), most advisers have high professional (non-classroom) experience (40.2%), 26.2% had medium and 33.6% had low. Professional (non-classroom) experience levels were placed into three categories: low experience (three years or less), medium (4-9 years) and high (10 or more years).

Education and professional experience have a negative numeric correlation (See Table 15). Advisers with a Ph.D. normally have less professional (non-classroom) experience than those with a master's or bachelor's degree. Conversely, those with a bachelor's degree have much more professional experience than those with a master's or doctorate. This phenomenon reached statistical significance (X^2= 15.271, d.f.= 4, p<.01). One explanation for this correlation (as discussed earlier) is that those who have invested their years in attaining advanced academic degrees have fewer years available for professional employment.

Advisers choose Experience over Academics

Most advisers say professional experience prepared them more than academics (See Table 16). More than half (53.1%) said professional (non-classroom) experience, while 32.9% indicated both education and professional experience and 14% said classroom and academics.

TABLE 16: Advisers say their professional experience best prepared them.
Q: Which do you feel best prepared you for newspaper advising?

	Percentage
Classroom and academics	14.0%
Classroom, academics, and professional experience equally	32.9%
Professional (non-classroom) experience	53.1%

Sampling error is plus or minus 2.2%
n=207; Missing=26

TABLE 17: Belief in Importance of Experience Proportional to One's Own Experience

	Classroom & Academics	Class, Academic & Professional	Professional Experience	Other	% of Total
Low Experience	75%	38.2%	14.7%	59.1%	33.5%
Medium Exp.	7.1%	39.7%	23.9%	22.7%	26.4%
High Experience	17.9%	22.1%	**61.5%**	18.2%	40.1%

n=227; Missing=7, X^2=63.58546; d.f.=6, p<.01

Correlation Between High Experience and Preparation Perspective

Correlation was found between levels of professional (non-classroom) experience and perspective as to what best prepared each for advising. As illustrated in **Table 17**, selection of a preparation category correlates to the advisers' amount of professional experience. Those with high professional experience (10 years or more) were more likely to believe that their experience best prepared them to advise student newspapers. Support for this "experience" preparation perspective drops as experience levels decrease.

A cross tabulation compared the responses to two survey questions: *"Which do you feel best prepared you for newspaper advising?* " with "*How many years of non-classroom (professional) experience have you had?*" Significance levels were reached below the .01 level with Chi Square analysis (X^2=63.58546; d.f.=6, n=227), Pearson R and Kendall's Tau C (d.f.=6), indicating that statistical evidence exists that this correlation was not by chance. Agreement seems related to the adviser's own professional background: the more experience, the greater the belief that it was most beneficial to preparation. Similarly, the lower the experience levels, the greater the belief that classroom and academics best prepared them for advising.

Belief in Experience Extends Across All Education Levels

Not only did advisers support the hypothesis at levels relating to their own professional *experience*, they also indicated a strong belief in the importance of professional experience across *educational* categories (see **Table 18**). Those with a bachelor's degree were predictably

TABLE 18: Belief in the Importance of Professional (Non-Classroom) Experience

	Classroom & Academics	Class, Academic & Professional	Professional Experience	Other	% of Total
Ph.D.	25.6%	**41.0%**	25.6%	7.7%	17.5%
Master's degree	11.4%	29.5%	**49.2%**	9.8%	58.8%
Bachelor's	5.6%	22.2%	**61.1%**	11.1%	23.7%

n=230; Missing=3

the most likely to view professional experience as their best preparation for advising (61.1%). But the support continued among those with master's degrees and Ph.D.'s.

Nearly half (49.2%) of master's degree-level advisers indicated that professional experience best qualified them, with 11.4% saying classroom and 29.5% saying both.

While it may have been expected that the high-education group would report academics as the element which best prepared them, those with Ph.D.'s were nearly evenly split between professional and classroom as to which prepared them for advising. A quarter (25.6%) said professional experience best prepared them, while 25.6% said classroom and academics. Forty-one percent said both.

These data suggest that as education increases, the importance of professional experiences diminishes, but remains strong (n=203). A Chi Square (without "other" category) indicates that the trend is probably not by chance (X^2=16.15; d.f.=4, p<.01 n=203).

Most Advisers Want to Quit

This study finds that most advisers continue to quit at a level in excess of that hypothesized (H5). While Kopenhaver and Spielberger found that more than half of publication advisers (which includes student publications in addition to newspapers) have been at their position for less than five years,[27] this study finds that 56.8% of newspaper advisers plan to quit advising within five years. (See Table 19).

[27] Kopenhaver and Spielberger, 1987, op. cit.

TABLE 19: Adviser Employment Preferences: Five Years From Now

	Percentage
Cont. advising student newspapers	32.8%
Teaching in classroom/ not advise	21.0%
Working in administration/ not advise	8.7%
Working outside college or university	12.7%
Cont. advise and classroom (write-in)	9.2%
Administration and teaching (write-in)	1.3%
Cont. advising and admin. (write-in)	1.3%
Other employment or retirement	13.1%

n=229

	Percentage
Continue advising	43.2%
Not continue advising	56.8%

n=229

Discussion

A Paradox: High Enjoyment, High Turnover

Data from this study indicates that most advisers (93.5%) enjoy their work assisting students in production of a campus newspaper. Yet it appears paradoxical that 56.8% say they desire to leave this work within five years. Even 44% of those who have been advising for ten or more years say they desire to leave. While more research is necessary to fully quantify why advisers resign, this study has determined many of the primary reasons .

Preference for Classroom Teaching

Many prefer a standard classroom teaching assignment. While advisers say they enjoy their work (93.5%), even more say they enjoy classroom teaching (94.5%). One-third say they prefer either classroom teaching, administration, or a combination of the two.

Curiously, while many advisers indicate a preference for classroom teaching, previous research indicates that satisfaction rates are generally lower than for advising. Perhaps in search of greener grass, advisers are leaving a field boasting a 93.5% satisfaction level for other forms of journalism teaching which has an 83% satisfaction rate.[28]

[28] Fedler and Counts, op. cit.

Lower Compensation

Perceptually, many advisers say other journalism faculty are paid more than they are for the same amount of education or professional experience. Advisers may be justified in this belief. While college communications faculty groups (including the ranks of professor, associate professor and assistant professor) have a mean salary of $40,862.66,[29] only 34.7% of advisers receive $35,000 or more.[30]

Lower Tenure Levels

Previous research indicates that 89% of all faculty members are tenure track and that 64% of all college-level faculty members have tenure.[31] This indicates that 71.9% of all university faculty who could have tenure do, while just 53% of publication advisers do.[32] This present study indicates that two-thirds of advisers are aware that tenure is either not available to them or is more difficult to get. This belief may account for much of the exodus from advising.

Clearly, those advisers with a doctorate have a higher possibility of receiving tenure (67.6%) than those who do not. But even this greater tenure opportunity for advisers with a doctorate remains well below the university-wide tenure rate for all academic ranks. It stands at 89%.[33] (No study listing tenure rates specifically for mass communications faculty was discovered, thus no direct comparison between advisers and their peers is possible in this study.)

Perception of Lower Status

Many advisers believe that classroom journalism educators view them as "second string" faculty. More than half of the advisers surveyed indicate that they believe most classroom

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[29] AAUP study, 1991, pp. 13, op cit.

[30] Kopenhaver and Spielberger, 1991, op. cit. It should be noted, however, that since previous research questions were not directed at a comparison of these two groups, quantification may have an error factor. Nor are relative educational or experiential levels specifically quantified here.

[31] AAUP study, 1991, pp.13-29, op. cit.

[32] Kopenhaver and Spielberger, 1991, op. cit.

[33] AAUP study, 1991, pp. 13, op cit.

journalism faculty view the classroom as more important than advising. Few advisers share this belief. Just one-third of journalism classroom educators believe the two teaching areas are equal in importance, advisers say, while three-fourths of advisers believe they are.

Inadequate Professional Preparation

More than half of the respondents indicated they were best prepared for their advising duties through professional non-classroom experiences. One-fourth of advisers have two years or less of professional experience. This lack of professional preparation appears to contribute to the high turnover rate.

Workload

Previous research has indicated that one-fourth of advisers receive no release time from their other duties to advise student publications.[34] While workload measurement was not within the scope of this study, lack of release time must be considered as another reason for many advisers choose to leave their profession.

Misconception: Strong Enjoyment Levels

While turnover rates are high (more than half plan to leave within five years), one could hypothesize low enjoyment levels exist. Curiously, nearly all advisers (93.5%) enjoy their work, nearly two-thirds strongly. It appears that many advisers quit not because they dislike their work; rather, to search for something better. Classroom teaching is one attractive alternative for advisers. While they strongly enjoy their work, even a higher percentage enjoys classroom teaching (94.5%).

Misconception: Low Conflict with Administrators

Advisers who feel pressured by administrators are prime candidates for short duration employment as advisers. But the number of advisers who expressed strong concern about censorship or news content control appears small in relation to the amount of attention and speculation many journalists and academics have given to this issue.

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[34] Ibid.

While administrators do ask advisers to print or not print certain news items, generally these requests are few and far between. Most advisers (85.8%) indicate they have never been ask to not print a news item; few were asked more that twice during a 12 month period.

Still, this figure indicates that 14.2% of advisers are called upon to *not report* on issues apparently offensive to administrators. Few advisers went along with such requests (95.7% indicate they have not complied), yet emotional trauma experienced by these advisers certainly must contribute to the high adviser turnover rate.

Administrative Pressure to Publish Stronger

Concern is commonly placed on conflicts between administrators and student newspaper management over whether a story *should be pulled* from the newspaper. This study indicates that the more frequent problem faced by advisers is whether to comply with administrative requests *to publish* stories. Over one-fourth of advisers (28.9%) have been asked and 19.6% complied. Yet even this area of conflict may be less serious than it appears, since the submission of newsworthy press releases is included among these responses.

Surprisingly, advisers receiving administrative funding surprisingly were asked slightly less often to withhold or include news items than was the general sample. Compliance, however, was slightly higher by those receiving such funding. Neither difference was statistically significant. Funding from administrative sources does not appear to significantly influence news selection. While advisers are willing to accept news items from administrative funding sources, rarely did administrators ask that a story be pulled prior to publication. When administrators did ask, few advisers were willing to comply.

While one-fifth of advisers indicate that during their career they have been threatened with job dismissal (5.2%) or pressured strongly (15.2%) to run a news item, two-thirds of advisers believe that control of news content is strongly not tied to the funding source. Just 12.2% indicating it is either strongly tied (3.2%) or somewhat tied (9%).

Conclusions

Most advisers enjoy their work. Many quit because they seek something better. A feeling of inferiority seems to exist for many. They believe that their peers in the classroom view their work as less important. They believe that journalism departments discriminate against them on issues of tenure and compensation. This perspective may explain why many seek classroom teaching assignments. While some do perceive pressure from administrators over news selection, only 3% view this as a serious problem.

Hiring the Successful Adviser

Tragically, this study confirms what has been found in previous studies: most advisers want to quit. While improving the working conditions and economic benefits of advisers is paramount to longevity, certain characteristics are found in the successful adviser that are not as prevalent in short-term advisers. A listing of these traits can assist administrators in choosing between applicants for an advising position (if an increase in adviser longevity is desired).

- Hire an adviser with lots of professional experience. While this study statistically demonstrates that those advisers with the most professional experience have the lowest longevity rates, this is certainly misleading. Those with less professional experience have been preoccupied with classroom teaching and working their way up the academic ladder. It must certainly be true for a position as diverse as advising that a candidate with broad professional experiences will be more successful. As determined in this study, long-term advisers also tend to be slightly more diverse professionally.
- Hire an adviser not only with lots of experience in diverse areas, but also a stronger-than-average education. Those who have been advising for 10 years or more indicated by a wide margin that both academics and professional experience best prepared them for the rigors of the job.

Yet administrators must also do their part. If working conditions are more demanding or less financially attractive than classroom teaching, the exodus will continue.

Steps to Increase Adviser Longevity

Sadly, many advisers believe they are on the "second string" of journalism teaching assignments. Advising the student newspaper is something relegated to the new faculty member at many schools --no one else wants it.

This can be changed.

Specific measures can be taken by administrators:

- Allow adequate comp time for the assignment. Determine the actual number of hours the adviser must put in for adequate service, then equitably reward them.
- Eliminate roadblocks toward tenure. If the student newspaper is to be considered a serious part of journalism education, place it on par with classroom teaching.
- Set deadlines for completion of each edition. Assure the adviser that meeting these deadlines is *more important* than the quality of the news and graphics. Too many student editors and advisers believe that a quality product is paramount. It is not. Physical and emotional survival is. Advisers who work into the early morning hours to fulfill their own quality standards are flirting with "burn out." Those attempting to meet the quality expectations of their colleagues will find the task impossible. Additionally, students must learn the importance and necessity of deadlines. Advisers will experience physical and emotional overload unless they pace themselves --or are forced to do so.

Summary

The purpose of this study has not been to debate whether classroom lecture is more useful or less useful than the "hands on" process of student newspaper publishing. Rather, this study measures the qualitative values and perceptions held by advisers of student newspapers.

Almost all advisers enjoy their work, but many believe classroom teaching is more enjoyable. Their desire to quit appears to come from two basic motivations: a search for "greener grass" and a perception of academic inferiority.

More research is necessary to rank-order these and other pressures on advisers and to more fully quantify these qualitative preferences. Additional qualitative studies would assist in measuring their perceptions and in determining the degree to which these perceptions are accurate.

It is hoped that administrators, armed with knowledge from this study, will be able to hire more discriminately, thus increasing adviser longevity. Additionally, those interested in advising a student newspaper gain from this study a deeper understanding of the pressures and concerns of advisers.

Advisers of student newspapers, at work on college campuses across the country, leave administrators and applicants with one primary message: They enjoy the work, but they seek parity with classroom teachers on issues of status, compensation and tenure.